

Application No. 09/425,436
AMENDMENT AFTER FINAL dated July 7, 2008
Reply to Office Action of March 7, 2008

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Canceled)

2. (Previously Presented) A cooking vessel comprising a pan and a removable lid assembly comprising a lid having a generally convex upper surface and a generally concave lower surface and a peripheral rim, said lid assembly further comprising a knob assembly on said upper surface and defining at least one aperture through said knob assembly and said lid, said lid assembly further comprising a thermometer including a probe extending downward through said aperture and a temperature display, wherein said probe has a bottom end disposed above the rim, said probe containing a temperature sensing device disposed beneath said aperture and within said cooking vessel, wherein said knob assembly includes a whistle body that provides an audible signal in response to flow of vapor therethrough, and a movable member having a dual function notch formed therein that operates selectively both as a release to selectively permit removal of the movable member for cleaning, and as a slot for vapor discharge to selectively enable the whistle body.

3. (Previously Presented) A cooking vessel in accordance with claim 2 wherein said knob assembly further includes a knob body attached to said lid, and a vapor discharge aperture communicating with said whistle body through which vapor from the whistle body is discharged, and wherein said dual function notch is movable between a whistle-enabling position in which said notch is aligned with said vapor discharge aperture to permit discharge of vapor therethrough, and a range of whistle-disabling positions in which said notch is not

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aligned with said discharge aperture, such that said movable member inhibits discharge of vapor therethrough.

4. (Original) A cooking vessel in accordance with claim 3 wherein said knob body includes a retaining member, and wherein said notch is movable between a release position in which it is aligned with said retaining member and in which said movable member may be removed from said knob body, and a retained position in which said notch is not aligned with said retaining member, and said retaining member prevents removal of said movable member from said knob body.

5. (Original) A cooking vessel in accordance with claim 4 wherein said movable member is rotatable.

6. (Original) A cooking vessel in accordance with claim 5 wherein said thermometer is fixedly attached to said movable member.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Previously Presented) A cooking vessel lid assembly comprising a lid with an upper surface and a knob assembly on said upper surface of said lid, said knob assembly including a whistle and a movable member having a dual function notch formed therein that operates selectively both as a release to selectively permit removal of the movable member for cleaning, and as a slot for vapor discharge to selectively enable said whistle.

9. (Previously Presented) A cooking vessel lid assembly in accordance with claim 8 wherein said upper surface of said lid is generally convex and said lid includes a generally concave lower surface and a peripheral rim.

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10. (Previously Presented) A cooking vessel lid assembly in accordance with claim 8 wherein said lid assembly includes an aperture through said knob assembly and said lid, said lid assembly further including a thermometer extending through said aperture.

11. (Previously Presented) A cooking vessel lid assembly in accordance with claim 10 wherein said thermometer includes a probe extending downward through said aperture and a temperature display, wherein said probe has a bottom end disposed above said rim.

12. (Previously Presented) A cooking vessel lid assembly in accordance with claim 8 wherein said knob assembly includes a knob body attached to said lid, a whistle body of said whistle that provides an audible signal in response to flow of vapor therethrough, and a vapor discharge aperture communicating with said whistle body through which vapor from the whistle body is discharged, and wherein said dual function notch is movable between a whistle-enabling position in which said notch is aligned with said vapor discharge aperture to permit discharge of vapor therethrough, and a range of whistle-disabling positions in which said notch is not aligned with said discharge aperture, such that said movable member inhibits discharge of vapor therethrough.

13. (Previously Presented) A cooking vessel lid assembly in accordance with claim 12 wherein said knob body includes a retaining member, and wherein said notch is movable between a release position in which it is aligned with said retaining member and in which said movable member may be removed from said knob body, and a retained position in which said notch is not aligned with said retaining member, and said retaining member prevents removal of said movable member from said knob body.

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14. (Previously Presented) A cooking vessel lid assembly in accordance with claim 13 wherein said movable member is rotatable.

15. (Previously Presented) A cooking vessel assembly comprising a pan, a removable lid assembly comprising a lid having a generally convex upper surface and a generally concave lower surface and a peripheral rim, said lid assembly further comprising a knob assembly on said upper surface and defining at least one aperture through said knob assembly and said lid, said lid assembly further comprising a thermometer including a probe extending downward through said aperture and a temperature display, wherein said probe has a bottom end disposed above the rim, said knob assembly including a whistle body that provides an audible signal in response to flow of vapor therethrough, and a movable member having a dual function notch formed therein that operates both as a release to selectively permit removal of the movable member for cleaning, and as a slot for vapor discharge to selectively enable the whistle.

16. (Previously Presented) A cooking vessel in accordance with claim 15 wherein said knob assembly further includes a knob body attached to said lid, and a vapor discharge aperture communicating with said whistle body through which vapor from the whistle body is discharged, and wherein said dual function notch is movable between a whistle-enabling position in which said notch is aligned with said vapor discharge aperture to permit discharge of vapor therethrough, and a range of whistle-disabling positions in which said notch is not aligned with said discharge aperture, such that said movable member inhibits discharge of vapor therethrough.

17. (Previously Presented) A cooking vessel in accordance with claim 16 wherein said knob body includes a retaining member, and wherein said notch is movable between a release position in which it is aligned with said retaining member and in which said movable

member may be removed from said knob body, and a retained position in which said notch is not aligned with said retaining member, and said retaining member prevents removal of said movable member from said knob body.

18. (Previously Presented) A cooking vessel in accordance with claim 17 wherein said movable member is rotatable.

19. (Previously Presented) A cooking vessel in accordance with claim 18 wherein said thermometer is fixedly attached to said movable member.

20. (Previously Presented) Waterless cookware comprising a waterless cooking vessel configured for stove top waterless cooking applications at sub-atmospheric pressure including a pan and a removable lid assembly comprising a lid having an upper surface and a lower surface and a peripheral rim, said lid assembly further comprising a knob body on said upper surface and defining at least one aperture through said knob body and said lid, said lid assembly further comprising a thermometer including a probe extending downward through said aperture and a temperature display, wherein said probe has a bottom end disposed above the rim, said probe containing a temperature sensing device disposed beneath said aperture and within said cooking vessel, said thermometer being rapidly responsive to temperature changes within the cooking vessel, and being removable from said knob body by lifting the thermometer therefrom to facilitate cleaning.

21. (Previously Presented) A cooking vessel in accordance with claim 20 wherein said probe comprises a thin-walled, hollow tubular structure, said bottom end containing the temperature sensing device communicating with the display.

22. (Previously Presented) A cooking vessel in accordance with claim 20 wherein said lid assembly further comprises a holder that is removable from the lid for supporting said thermometer and a retaining member on the lid that selectively retains the thermometer thereon.

23. (Previously Presented) A method of waterless cooking comprising placing one or more food items in a waterless cooking pan configured for waterless cooking at sub-atmospheric pressures having a bottom wall, at least one side wall, and a removable lid assembly, said lid assembly comprising a lid having an upper surface and a rim, and having a knob assembly on said upper surface and said lid assembly having at least one aperture in the lid and at least one vent therethrough, and a thermometer including a probe extending downward through said aperture and a temperature display, said probe having a lower end disposed slightly above the elevation of the rim of the lid;

applying heat to the bottom of the pan;

measuring temperature with said probe, said probe having a temperature sensing device disposed beneath said aperture and within said pan, above all of said food items to measure temperature between said food items and said lid assembly; and

when the temperature in the pan reaches a predetermined point, closing the vent and reducing the rate at which heat is supplied to the pan to cook the food items at low temperatures and pressures.

24. (Currently Amended) A waterless cooking utensil comprising:
a pan and a corresponding lid having an upper surface, a lower surface and a peripheral rim;
a knob assembly positioned on the upper surface of the lid;
at least one aperture extending through both the knob assembly and the lid;

a thermometer having a temperature display thereon and including a probe inserted through the at least one aperture;

the thermometer being selectively removable from the knob assembly for cleaning;

the probe having a bottom end such that when the thermometer is inserted through the aperture, the probe bottom end extends a predetermined distance beneath the lower surface of the lid such that the bottom end thereof is disposed above the lid peripheral rim to permit the thermometer to be rapidly responsive to temperature changes within the pan;

~~wherein the knob assembly includes a holder recess and a separate holding base removable from the knob assembly recess, the holder separate holding base surrounding the temperature display of the thermometer and defining a notch therein, the separate holding base for selectively supporting the thermometer [[to]] in the recess of the knob assembly; and~~

~~wherein the knob assembly includes a retaining member flange configured to selectively cooperate with the holder separate holding base to permit removal of the thermometer from the knob assembly when the holder notch is misaligned aligned with the retaining member flange and to retain the thermometer to the knob assembly when a portion of the holder is aligned with separate holding base engages the retaining member flange.~~

25. (Previously Presented) The waterless cooking utensil of claim 24, wherein the bottom end of the probe extends less than about 1.5 inches beneath the lower surface of the lid.

26. (Previously Presented) The waterless cooking utensil of claim 24, wherein the probe is a thin-walled, hollow tubular structure and the bottom end contains a temperature sensing device communicating with the temperature display.

27. (Canceled)

28. (Canceled)

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29. (Previously Presented) The waterless cooking utensil of claim 24, wherein the knob assembly has a profile such that the lid may be inverted and nested in the pan where the knob assembly generally does not contact a bottom surface of the pan.

30. (Currently Amended) The waterless cooking utensil of claim 24, wherein the ~~holder~~ separate holding base is configured for receipt in [[a]] the recess in the knob assembly and operable for selective removal of the thermometer without separate tools.

31. (New) The waterless cooking utensil of claim 24, wherein the separate holding base includes a knob portion surrounding the temperature display and an outwardly extending flange portion defining the notch therein.

32. (New) The waterless cooking utensil of claim 24, wherein the separate holding base is formed from a thermally insulative material.